

WESTON COUNCIL ON AGING
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE
Minutes – February 21, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am on the Weston COA Zoom application.

Present: Paul Foley, Kristen Frady, Vida Goldstein, John McCahan, Susan Pauker, Shirley Small-Rougeau, Dianne Sullivan, Susan Wagner, Teresa Young.

Absent: Peter Mitsakos, Prather Palmer

1. John read the following statement:

Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, “An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations”, authorizes municipal boards to hold fully remote or hybrid meetings through March of 2023. The law does not mandate or prohibit in-person meetings; instead, it allows the Town flexibility in that regard. As required, if a meeting is held fully remotely or as a hybrid meeting, adequate alternative access is provided through a video conferencing link included on the meeting agenda.

2. The minutes of January 10, 2023 were approved as written.

3. There were no residents’ comments.

4. Old Business

4a. **Social Justice Working Group.** Shirley reminded the committee that Race Amity Day that the SJWG is sponsoring will be occurring on Sunday, June 11. The Chief of the Chappaquiddick Wampanoag tribe is expected to speak. It will probably be held in the Community Center Great Room.

4.b. **MIT Aging Lab.** The discussion that Paul was to have had with Dr. Lee at the Aging Lab was postponed to this afternoon. Paul noted that the Lab had started in 1999 with a relatively narrow focus that has now expanded to include transportation, caregiving, home technology, longevity planning, housing, health, wellbeing and social sciences. He asked if there were questions that the committee would like answers to. Vida recalled the program from MIT a number of years ago that featured items that younger people could wear that would mimic the constraints imposed by aging. Susan Wagner identified the technology that improves the ability to stay in one’s home as most interesting. After some discussion the committee agreed that a meeting between Dr. Lee and this committee would be valuable. Paul will also obtain from Dr. Lee any recommendation she might have for a presentation on the current state of AI. Paul will send a summary of his discussion to the committee.

4.c. **Programming Possibilities for Artificial Intelligence and Social Media.** The committee members were in agreement that AI merited program time, the discussion focusing primarily on who would be best to run such a program. We concluded that a high school English or history teacher might be a good resource as it is those teachers who are facing a challenging impact from students submitting essays composed by AI. Vida will contact Carol Ott to obtain suggestions from her.

Additional programming suggestions that were discussed include:

- Services available to older adults through Springwell and potentially other providers. This subject was put on hold as Springwell currently is having difficulty in fulfilling its commitments.
- Health care changes that can be anticipated by the move that Amazon is making into the provision of health care.
- Pet care including concerns, responsibilities and costs involved in owning a pet. The committee was not able to identify a potential presenter and would continue to consider this item next meeting.

5. New Business.

Kristen informed the committee that a new director, Joan Ingersoll, would be joining the COA on March 20th. She is currently the director of the COA in Carlisle.

Vida suggested that Dr. Tom Perl, Director of the New England Centenarian Study and a Weston resident, might be invited back for a presentation.

End-of-life issues were discussed briefly as a subject the committee wishes to keep track of. Kristen enumerated some of the recent presentations.

Vida noted the success of Dr. Wein's recent presentation on osteoporosis. His wife, Sarah Shoenfeld, is a rheumatologist and would be a good presenter. Vida will ask her.

Vida also suggested that 'cloud based voice services' e.g. Alexa, might be a timely topic to orient our constituency to their use as well as their risk. It was not clear who might present this topic; Paul suggested that AARP might be a resource.

6. Scheduling and administrative matters.

The next meeting was scheduled for 10:00 am on Tuesday March 28, 2023 by Zoom. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Submitted by John McCahan